



Australian Bureau of Statistics

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Greater flexibility in working arrangements

Employees' working arrangements are becoming more flexible, according to an August 1997 survey of employees released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Findings indicating more flexible working arrangements include:

- an increase in the number of employees with flexible start and finish times (34 per cent to 37 per cent);
- an increase in the number of employees able to work extra hours in order to take time off (34 per cent to 38 per cent);
- a decrease in employees usually working Monday to Friday (64 per cent to 60 per cent); and
- an increase in employees choosing their own holiday break (69 per cent to 71 per cent).

Other key findings of the survey relating to working arrangements were a decrease in those entitled to a Rostered Day Off (28 per cent to 23 per cent), and the number of employees reporting that they regularly work paid or unpaid overtime remained relatively steady (33 per cent compared to 34 per cent).

In other survey findings, some 1.3 million employees (19 per cent) had an absence of at least three hours, in the two weeks prior to the survey. Three quarters of these employees were paid for their most recent absence. The most common reasons reported for absences were 'own ill health, physical disability or pregnancy' (53 per cent) and 'recreational purposes' (22 per cent).

Nearly 2 million employees (28 per cent) had children aged under 12 years in August 1997. Of these, 361,000 (19 per cent) had an absence of at least three hours in the two weeks prior to the survey. A higher proportion of females with children aged under 12 years reported 'caring for ill or disabled children' as the main reason for the absence from work (15 per cent compared to 4 per cent of males).

Details are in **Working Arrangements, Australia, August 1997** (cat. no. 6342.0) available from ABS Bookshops.

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